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My News Articles

Cleo I. Craig Foundation: MCC Balcony named after Craig foundation

President Cindy Ross announced a gift of \$200,000 from The Cleo L. Craig Foundation during a special ceremony in early March. President Ross was joined by C.L. Craig, Jr., second-generation Cameron alumnus and chairman of The Cleo L. Craig Foundation, and his wife, Helen, a foundation trustee and former Cameron student. The funds will be applied to construction of the McMahan Centennial Complex (MCC), the state-of-the-art student activities complex that opened last week.

“We are deeply grateful to the board of The Cleo L. Craig Foundation for its support,” President Ross said. “This generous gift will play a key role in Cameron’s ability to provide a complete collegiate experience for our students. It is particularly gratifying to learn of the significant role that Cameron played in the Craig’s lives and the recognition of that role that this momentous gift signals.”

“Education has always been a priority for The Cleo L. Craig Foundation, and

we are pleased to support Cameron University with this gift,” Craig said. “My parents attended Cameron when the institution was in its infancy. They would have never imagined that the high school and college they knew would grow to become a university of such stature. The transformation of this campus is something to behold. Today’s Cameron students are benefiting from everything Cameron has to offer.”

Vice President for University Advancement Albert Johnson, Jr. said that the university applied for the funds in October, and it is great that the Craig foundation helped the construction process so much. He added that the relationship of Cameron University with the Craig foundation helped it to find the grant.

“I do not want people to have the wrong idea that we applied for the grant at the last minute when we were out of funds,” Johnson said. “With a project of the status of the McMahan

Center, the additional funds allow us to do all that we want to do enhancing the complex itself.”

After receiving approval from the board of regents CU officially named the balcony of the MCC, which overlooks the Bentley Gardens, after The Cleo L. Craig Foundation.

The MCC is a multi-use, multi-purpose facility located at the heart of the Cameron University campus. It houses a variety of student activities, food services and community spaces. These include a student dining area, student activity areas, game room, meeting rooms, bookstore, a 400-seat ballroom and a balcony overlooking the Bentley Gardens.

The complex is currently under-going final preparations before the grand opening ceremony that will be held at noon on Thursday.

Childrens’ tale emits life at CU

The story of Little Red Riding Hood is well known by many. It has been passed along to children through many generations. At 3 p.m. on March 6, the story was told in a different way in the McCutcheon Recital Hall at Cameron University.

The story of Little Red Riding Hood was told as a children’s opera. The opera was presented by the Department of Music and the Southwest Oklahoma Opera Guide. Dr. Earl Logan, music director of the opera, said that the story of Little Red Riding Hood is a very old tale from medieval times in which a little girl meets a wolf in the forest. The wolf later attacks the girl and her grandmother, who are then rescued by a woodsman.

“This story is gentler in the opera. The wolf is not as bad as portrayed in the original story,” Dr. Logan said. “The story has a moral for the children. They should not talk to strangers because it can be dangerous.” The show at the McCutcheon Recital Hall was mainly for the parents and relatives of the singers who participated in the opera. Dr. Logan said that the opera is scheduled to be performed in five Lawton public schools. The opera had amused the children of three public schools before the Cameron performance.

“Today’s opera is mainly for the family. There will be more adults and few children in the audience today,” Dr. Logan said. Sabrina Harrell, a senior majoring in Vocal Music Education, plays the role of Little Red Riding Hood.

“I had fun doing the opera for the children,” Harrell said. “I have known the story forever and the children seem to like the wolf more than anyone in the opera,” Harrell said.

Jonathan Phelps, a senior majoring in Vocal Performance, played the role of the wolf. “I got the children to laugh when I performed in the public schools,” Phelps said. “There was a boy who cried when he saw me as a wolf.”

Anjelika Ramsdell, a junior majoring in Vocal Performance played the double role of both mother and grandmother of Little Red Riding Hood. The audience laughed to see the mother talking to the grandmother on a cell phone.

“It is fun to perform as a mother and grandmother in the story,” Ramsdell said. “I got the children to laugh when they saw me dance but they really seem to like the wolf.”

Tammy Cornish was one in the audience for the Sunday afternoon performance.

She said that she came to know about the opera from Sabrina’ mother.

“I liked the opera a lot which was really cute and made me smile a lot,” Cornish said.

Dr. Logan said that he chose the story of Little Red Riding Hood because it is perfect for the children.

“They love it. They are young and they laugh, clap and sway with the music,” Dr. Logan said. “There are so many people who want to hurt the children and I want them to know about that and be aware of it. It also carries the moral for the children to be kind to their parents and grandparents.” Dr. Logan said that the CU Music Department presents two operas a year. He said that the fall opera is more serious and the spring opera is for the children. The operas performed in the public schools are free in assistance with Southwest Oklahoma Opera Guide.

Yiuka Chan Spannagel, a graduate of Cameron and Dr. Logan’s co-coordinator, accompanied the singers on the piano. The opera was about 35 minutes long.

International students make up 7 percent of OU's Norman campus

Electrical engineering junior Farah Al-Saif came to OU from Saudi Arabia to have an adventurous study experience away from home.

Al-Saif is a miniscule portion of the 7 percent of international students on OU's Norman campus and about 5 percent of international students enrolled on all OU campuses.

"When I first came here it was hard to be away from home and family but now it is a second home for me." Al-Saif said. "I met friends from Saudi Arabia as well as from America and other countries which is a great experience."

International students travel from their home countries to a university elsewhere to stay there and complete a degree. Exchange students may travel abroad to a new school for only a semester or two through a reciprocal program, said Monica Sharp, director of International Student Services.

As of fall 2012, there were 1680 international and exchange students enrolled at OU in Norman. These students come from more than 114 countries across the world, according to the [OU Factbook](#). Since 1999, the number of such students at OU has not drastically increased or decreased, but has remained more or less

consistent.

The highest country of origin of international students on campus is China, with 510 followed by India with 109 students and Saudi Arabia with 95, according to the [Factbook](#).

The majority of international students are seeking degrees in petroleum engineering. "I love the fact that OU is one of the best universities that offers a degree in petroleum engineering," said Testi Sherif, a first year graduate student from Ethiopia. "There is a good school environment at OU and I have friends from different countries around the world."

When international students on campus need help with their immigration status and have other questions, they go to ISS. "We are information clearing house for international students regarding issues they might experience at OU — from obtaining Oklahoma state identification, Oklahoma driver's license, housing, enrollment, advisement, academic misconduct and other issues," Sharp said. "ISS helps direct international students to other resources on campus they need to get their questions answered."

There are 23 international student organizations at OU. International Advisory Committee represents all of them.

"IAC provides a forum for international student organizations to communicate with each other that strengthens the voice of international students at OU," IAC president Hillary Medina said.

"The branch of IAC, taskforce, allows international students to share their problems with us so that we can find a way to solve them."

IAC organizes different events during an academic year, including the International Bazaar, Homecoming, Eve of Nations, Mr. and Miss International and a fall retreat. Such events create an outlet for the expression of cultures at OU that bring all international student organizations together to showcase the diversity that OU has, Medina said.

Huixiao Liu, whose American name is Lydia, is an exchange student from China. She came to OU majoring in economics for the fall semester.

Liu said that she chose OU because of its placement in the middle of the U.S., she has friends studying here and because her school in China is an exchange school. "Life is colorful here at OU," Liu said. "Besides studies I get to meet friends and go to fun parties. I am happy that I have gained a lot of new experiences here."

Art student sketches Academic Festival speakers for his journal

A Cameron University art student has a unique way of keeping the memories of Academic Festival 2011-2012. When others are listening to the speakers during the Festival in the theater and during student sessions, Matthew Hughes does more than that.

Hughes, who is a sophomore majoring in Fine Arts, said that he is making sketches as a part of his Art of Journaling class this semester.

"In my class I have to fill a book with sketches as a way of documenting what I am doing during this semester," Hughes said. "So I thought of sketching the Academic Festival speakers when I attend the events."

Hughes attends the Academic Festival for his Honors class, Great Works. He also has a more personal reason to attend them.

"My wife is military," Hughes said. "Therefore our lives are directly and indirectly affected by what is going on in Afghanistan."

Hughes said that before sketching each speaker, he attends the student session and tries to get an idea of the speaker's body language and makes the sketch during the theatre session. "I try to get a hint on how the speakers talk and also

their expressions beforehand," Hughes said. "In the theater I draw them when they are speaking."

Hughes said that he tries to find a good spot in the theatre so that it is easier for him to sketch the speakers.

"If I get a good spot then I can get a good view of the speakers," Hughes said. "Also I try to finish the sketch as soon as I can and listen to what they are saying after I am done."

Hughes has been able to manage drawing the speakers in the theatre though most of the lights are off while they are speaking. "I don't find drawing to be an issue in the theater although it is somewhat dark," Hughes said. "I use the light coming from the stage to be able to see what I am doing, and if needed then I make some changes later when I am able to see my drawing in the full light."

Hughes said that he has received positive responses from the speakers when he takes the sketches for an autograph. "I take the sketches to the speakers for an autograph during the book signing," Hughes said. "I introduce them to myself and let them know that I am an Art student so that it does not seem strange." Hughes will continue making the sketches

of the speakers in the spring. He will also sketch Dr. Fredrick Hiebert, an archeologist and explorer, who will be appearing as a guest lecturer in the spring to speak about the art of Afghanistan.

"Though Dr. Hiebert is not speaking as a part of Academic Festival I still want to sketch him," Hughes said. "Since he will also be talking about Afghanistan, I would like to add his sketch to my journal in spring."

To Hughes, making the sketches on different events in his life is like keeping a notebook.

"Since I am an artist I make sketches to keep a memory of different things I do," Hughes said. "It is just like taking notes or taking pictures to others."

Hughes plans to graduate from Cameron and then wants to pursue his Master's degree in Fine Arts.

"I would like to teach students at the university level after I finish my studies," Hughes said. "I would also like to continue my work as an artist."